

## Process for Designating Future GMAs / Proactive Groundwater Areas

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From various discussions, two potentially incongruous concepts have been floated for something referred to as a "Groundwater Area of Concern." This memorandum is an attempt to help us through some of the incongruities and is floated for clarification purposes only.

The first concept of a GAC was as a step in the process for designating future GMAs. In this conception, a GAC is an area that would merit a closer look to see if the groundwater situation was just hunky-dory, or if a GMA was warranted. For sake of discussion, let's call this concept of a GAC "Groundwater Interest Areas" (GICs) for now.

The second concept was that a GAC would be what some have termed "baby-GMAs," in which stakeholders would be notified that potential groundwater quantity problems were looming, and if not turned around, undesirable conditions would result, and potentially a formal GMA process would be required. This concept seems predicated on two notions, the first is to give people in certain areas of the state a notice that they may have a problem, and the second, I think, is to avoid the formal GMA process, which some may think is onerous. For sake of discussion, let's call this concept of a GAC "Proactive Groundwater Areas" (PGAs).

### Process for Designating Future GMA

The working definition of future GMAs (Groundwater Management Areas) has been parts of Wisconsin which meet an "adverse affects" criterion and a "coordinated response" criterion, and then received a designation as such. (I believe that to be correct grammatically, we ought to say "adverse effects" rather than "affects," and that's what I'll do from here on.)

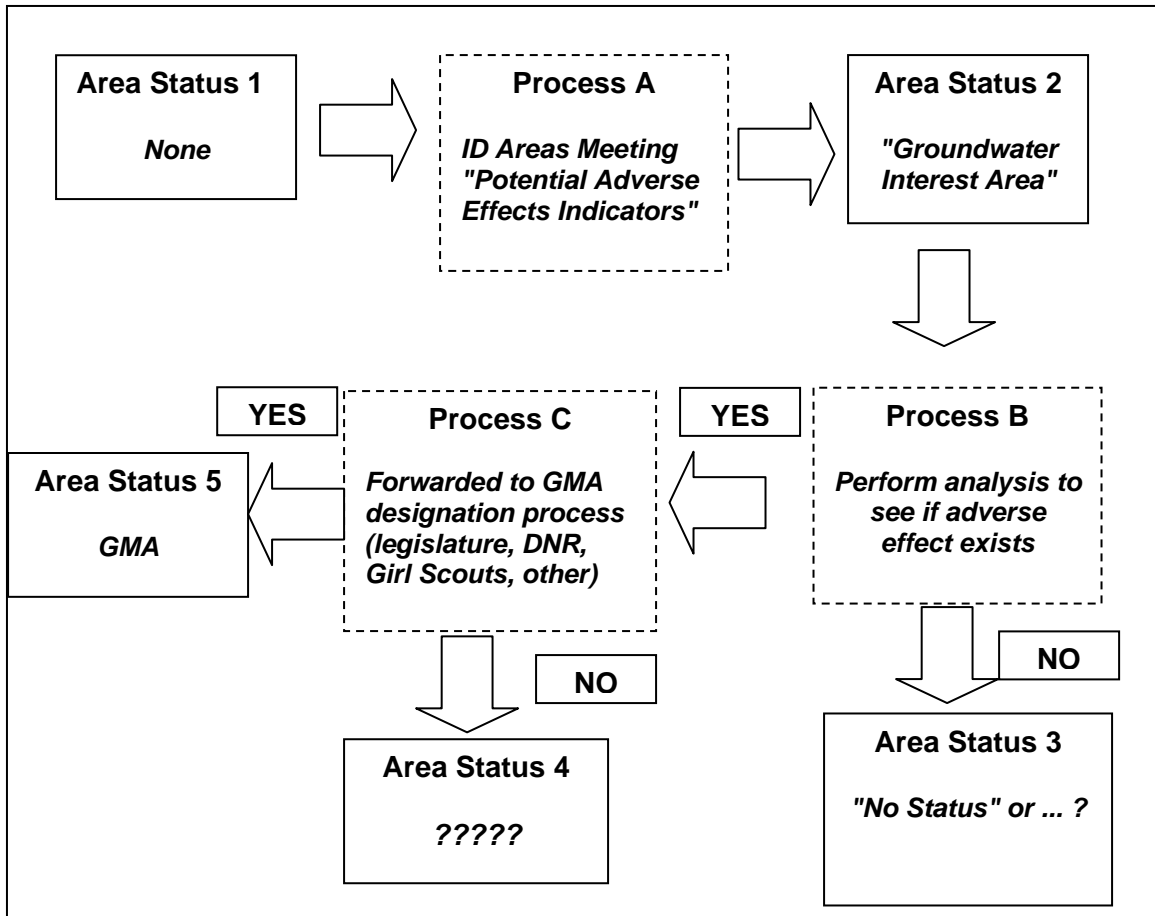
The adverse effects criterion is:

"... the withdrawal of groundwater over the long term adversely affects the availability of water for use or adversely affects water quality due to the effects of drawdown..."

The coordinated response criterion is:

"there is a need for a coordinated response among the state, local governmental units, regional planning commissions, and public and private users of groundwater..."

Presently, there is not a map product or other designation of areas that meet the adverse affects criterion. Hence a need exists for defining and designating these. The following may outline a process for sifting areas on the way to GMA designation:



In this conception, we start with the Wisconsin landscape ("Area Status 1") and by going through some process (Process A) see what areas might rise to some initial level of concern and identified as "Groundwater Interest Areas." Due to the desires of the regulated community for certainty, Process A could use some "bright line" tests, recognizing that farther along some scientific, technical, and political judgment will be used. Presumably Process A would involve something like the criteria put forth by Doug Cherkauer. "Groundwater Interest Areas" would undergo an analysis to see if they pass an "adverse effects test" (Process B) which will require some scientific and technical analysis. Areas passing an adverse effects finding get recommended Process C, and whatever body or political process decides on GMAs, using whatever criteria they're going to use. Presumably this would have something to do with evaluating the "coordinated response" criterion. If they decide to invoke a GMA, so it goes, if not, the area lapses into some sort of limbo state.

#### Proactive Groundwater Areas - Baby GMAs

Given a purpose of PGAs to get ahead of anticipated problems, how might these be nominated and designated?

1. Through the GMA process - areas with status 3 or 4 where trends indicate a looming problem could be designated as PGAs.

2. By concerned governments, planning authorities, citizens.

3. Other?

What now?

To move forward in the discussion, we could separate out the existing 7. in the McCartney consensus table into two items for further fleshing out later on.

7.1. To facilitate planning and mitigation of areas where, left unaddressed, groundwater quantity conditions are expected to deteriorate, Proactive Groundwater Areas shall be nominated. <<procedure to be determined>>

7.2 Future GMAs shall be designated through a process involving the following steps